

Cubberla-Witton Catchments Network Inc
Annual General Meeting
26^h March 2013

President's Report

Based on Cubberla-Witton Catchments Network's (CWCN) changed financial year, this report covers 15 months rather than the usual 12 months.

Throughout the reporting period CWCN has continued to implement its second **Strategic Plan** with the continuing focus areas of *Landcare and Biodiversity, Waterways and Pollution, Community Engagement and Education*, as well as *Corporate Development*.

Our clearly defined core aims remain the protection and enhancement of Inner West biodiversity and the repair and development of corridors for wildlife movement between the Brisbane River, Mt Coot-tha and the D'Aguiar Range. Our ***Cubberla Creek Connect, Witton for Wildlife, and Toowong Creek Turnaround*** projects have received justification in the Draft City Plan where all three are recognised in their potential and importance. This is of particular significance and needs constant vigilance as the SEQ Regional Plan has the potential to forget about our natural assets.

CWCN is committed to protecting them through on-ground rehabilitation, community education and lobbying for a renewal of Brisbane City Council's Biodiversity Strategy.

- Our ***Witton for Wildlife*** project continues to benefit from the Federal Government's **Caring for Our Country** grant of almost \$20,000 which is being used to rehabilitate a riparian section of Moore Park. Over thirty large weed trees and a thicket of Ochna have been removed, a large school planting with all Year 5 students from Indooroopilly State School has taken place, and a Family Fun Day is scheduled as a large community engagement event for early June. A big thank you has to go to Des Hoban and the Moore Park Bushcare Group.
- Seed Funding received from **Illum-A-Lite**, supported and facilitated by **SEQ Catchments**, to the value of \$15,000 has resulted in an exceptional outcome with more than three times the value added to the project by in-kind support through volunteer work or material support, the latter by BCC for HB sites and SOWN with plants raised at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre. The project specifically targeted vulnerable and endangered species. Multiple projects across our catchments involving i.e. Indooroopilly Scouts, University Mine and Habitat groups participated in helping to conserve the Glossy black-cockatoo and the Richmond Birdwing butterfly. Efforts continue and hundreds of additional food plants for the Glossy Black Cockatoo have been planted
- Eight applications for **BCC's Community Conservation Initiatives Assistance (CCIA)** were submitted by *Inner West bush care groups and the Cubberla-Witton Catchments Network*. Three were successful, two of them in the upper reaches of Cubberla Creek, Merri Merri Park/Greenford Street and Dillingen Park bikeway area, and in the same creek's lower reaches at Rainbow Forest. Written confirmation has not yet been received.

- **Offset funding from the Legacy Way** project is intended to rehabilitate a major gully in the grounds of Fig Tree Pocket Equestrian Centre, part of a wildlife corridor, currently highly weed infested but with extraordinary potential. Contractors have been engaged to cost the rehabilitation work. This project is meant to offset some of the damage the Legacy Way project does to two of our Inner West catchments. Although many verbal assurances have been given and site visits have taken place, it appears more than difficult to receive any confirmation in writing.
- CWCN has continued to work with a small number of **private landholders**, especially those living on properties which abut riparian areas along Toowong and Cubberla Creeks. Property Owners have been given advice and on the odd occasion material help. A more intensive approach is planned to engage property owners in the building and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors.
- CWCN is currently working on putting together a large application for the **Federal Government provided Caring for Our Country Target Area Grant** which this year has urban waterways as one key area. It is a unique chance for us and is unlikely to be repeated in the foreseeable future. We will focus on our three key wildlife corridors. We have already made contact with several of our bush care groups and will continue to assess potential with them and private landholders before the application is submitted.
- CWCN has also nominated sites to **SEQ Catchments** for their application for a **Biodiversity Grant covering all of Brisbane**, also provided by Federal Government. In both cases plenty of detail has be worked out and negotiations to be had before everything is completed.
- **Corporate volunteering** plays an important part in our rehabilitation efforts in the upper reaches of Cubberla Creek.. **Golder Associates volunteers** have continued to bring their enthusiasm and substantial presence to Merri Merri Park and Greenford Street with the largest working bee to date seeing 50 Golder volunteers participate. Four working bees are scheduled per year, and the first one scheduled for 2013 has successfully taken place . A Family Fun Day is planned for July.
- CWCN is grateful to Brisbane City Council's **Habitat Brisbane Program** for the immense support our local bush care groups' rehabilitation efforts receive. Angie Brace (now on maternity leave), Andrew Wallace and Cath Cleary have been exceptional in their support.
- High praise is going to all our **Habitat Brisbane registered groups** who have continued to put all their volunteer enthusiasm and energy into making a difference in the Inner West catchments with some members participating in bushland and waterway rehabilitation
- We express our ongoing gratitude to **Men of the Trees** who have continued to provide rehabilitation support at Gubberley Creek (Kenmore Anglican Church) and Toowong Creek.
- We thank **THECA** for planting Richmond Birdwing Vines at Moore Park and the **Richmond Birdwing Recovery Network** for providing plants which were established at Toowong Creek.
- Our current lack of opportunity to **propagate native plants** has to a small part been offset by plants received from **SOWN (Save our Waterways Now)** who closely cooperate with the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre. A few thousand plants have been received and planted in Habitat sites and on properties like Indooroopilly Scouts, University of Queensland Mine and along residential creek lines. Our own seed propagation will continue to be on hold until our Catchment Centre has been set up. However, we have received confirmation that SOWN is prepared to help us with establishment and provision of plants, and we may take on some distribution of Land for Wildlife provisions based on propagation done at the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre.
- To make informed decisions about measures for improvement of habitat we need to know our existing biodiversity levels. Therefore CWCN will continue to put emphasis on biodiversity surveys. In order to conduct **surveys of other than invertebrate fauna** an **animal ethics permit** is required. Brisbane City Council has again withdrawn the permit

as it apparently was too labour intensive for them. We have to assume that Council does not wish to use community groups to help assess local biodiversity and potentially does not wish to gain knowledge about local biodiversity either. Whether the latter is linked to the continuing lack of a BCC Biodiversity Strategy is up to interpretation.

The alternative is that the work is done by volunteer community groups. A three year permit would cost \$600 plus. At this point in time and due to lack of Council support, alternatives are being discussed at the Brisbane Catchments Network . For CWCN a fish survey scheduled for April is cancelled, and a frog survey scheduled for later this year awaits a decision on the animal ethics permit.

Waterways and Pollution

- **Water Quality Monitoring** at various locations in our local creeks continues to be carried out on a monthly basis. We have to thank SEQ catchments for exemplary support not only with the calibration of our Horiba monitoring device, but also with support through training and the establishment of the Unidap database where all our data are assembled and placed on the Bureau of Meteorology website. Ray Kelly continues to be our Waterway Champion with covering the workload with enthusiasm and diligence.

We know that our Horiba monitoring device is close to its use-by date with repair material soon not available anymore. We will have to find the substantial finances to replace it soon, not an easy task, as the device costs over \$5000.

- The fish surveys have been mentioned above and don't need any further mention under this heading.

- The **Legacy Way** project continues to cause major concerns. At **Toowong Creek** turbidity levels are back to normal, coinciding with the end of actual earth works rather than with preventative mitigation measures put in place by Transcity.

At this point, **Witton Creek** is under threat as Transcity intends to divert the creek to accommodate additional entry/exit lanes between Western Freeway and Moggill Road. The proposed diversion reflects an obviously cost effective engineering solution with no consideration given to creek health. The area affected is a Dept of Main Roads owned area between Russell Tce and the Western Freeway, and utterly neglected by them. It is in its entirety a flood plain and also contains a wetland area.

A group of CWCN members has been in constant contact with Transcity and Brisbane City Council's arm of the Legacy Way project. We have provided Transcity with a sketched alternative design which is currently under investigation. In the meantime and despite knowledge of changes being made to the original design Brisbane City Council has applied for a Water Permit with the old design to "speed things up". Thanks have to go to the CWCN team consisting of Tony Pressland, Des Hoban, Lois Eden, Jutta Godwin, and Ross Kapitzke who with his professional expertise has been able to provide invaluable advice. Also part of the team was Phil Carter from the Kimba St Reserve. We will keep you posted about the outcomes.

The entire entry/exit lane project will be felt along Tatong Street, Carinya St Park and Kimba St Reserve on one side of the Freeway, and by Moore Park and "The Paddock" on the other side. Moore Park will see the car park at the entrance to the park closed as the Freeway batter is being extended in that section of the park. Apparently, traffic through Moore Park for material transport to reach Freeway working areas is still being considered by Transcity.

CWCN is in regular contact with a very strong community action group along Carinya Street which has succeeded in saving some trees, unnecessarily scheduled for removal, and seems to have achieved some mitigation measures to do with noise and safety. CWCN has consistently followed a collaborative approach and hopes to achieve best outcomes that way, although this approach has not always been returned.

Community Engagement/Education

- A highly successful **National Tree Day** event took place at Toowong Creek with 150 people participating and 1000 plants being established. The Toowong Creek Bushcare Group was grateful to receive help from several CWCN members on a very busy day. A big thank you also goes to Andrew Wallace from Habitat Brisbane for providing support with water, tools, crystals, plants, to Illum-A-Lite for providing plants, to The Bridge (student organisation at UQ) for participating with almost forty enthusiastic volunteers, and to Conservation Volunteers Australia who came in large numbers too. Much appreciated was the financial support by Cr Peter Matic and the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund to finance Geckoes Wildlife Presentation and a luscious morning tea.
- Despite bad weather forecast almost 70 Kenmore Girl Guides and Brownies and their leader plus several additional families came to join our traditional **Clean up Australia** activities at corner Moggill Road and Marshall Lane. Rain stopped before we started and only commenced just before our dedicated time was over. A big thank you to all participating and special gratitude goes to Maureen Diamond, Robin Trotter and Des Hoban for supporting the event.
- CWCN conducted a highly successful **Workshop "Creating Habitat for Small Birds"** at The Hut. Richard Noske, Rae Clarke and Rod Brown from Birds Queensland were required to guide the participants on bird walks around the Hut. Birds Queensland President Richard Noske gave an impressive introduction to the many small birds we have or could have in our area if habitat was provided, and Jutta Godwin provided illustrated information on why and how specifically designed small bird habitat is to be established. The workshop was booked out within three days. 55 people were well at/above the limits of the Hut, and almost the same amount were on a waiting list. Jutta's talk has been repeated at last year's Habitat Brisbane's Restoration Celebration, and she has two invitations from garden clubs as well as another one from Habitat Brisbane to present.
- A **Bird Walk at the Indooroopilly Mine** had to be cancelled due to heavy rain and is now rescheduled for 6th April with previously booked participants the first ones to have a place.
- CWCN continues its long term cooperation with **Indooroopilly State School** in Moore Park. Like every year all Grade 5 students came to plant, in 2012 on the Caring for our Country site, prepared by the Moore Park Bushcare Group under Des Hoban's guidance with provision of plants by BCC's Habitat Brisbane Program. Additional program points were Cath O'Neil's "Bushcare Buddies" talk (provided courtesy of Brisbane City Council) and the interactive learning activity of the Catchment Game, guided by Jutta Godwin.
- For a total of 19 weeks 16 year old students from **Brisbane Boys College** are, on a weekly basis, coming to the upper reaches of Toowong Creek to plant and weed (the latter to lesser extent) under the guidance of Jutta Godwin. Due to weather one of these working bees was replaced by Jutta giving a talk to two student groups at the college and talking about catchments and the work of our catchment group. The cooperation is exceptional and we are hoping to develop long term cooperation out of this successful engagement.
- CWCN has continued to hold **General Meetings with guest speakers or other program highlights at Indooroopilly Library**, usually well attended. Among our speakers and topics were
 - Lyn Cole on Glossy Black Cockatoos
 - Movie "Dirt - The Movie"
 - Movie "Kangaroos - Faces in the Mob"
 - Ray Blick on Mistletoes
 - James Pauly/Beyond Zero Emission on renewable energy and potential targets for Australia

- End of year celebration with handing out awards to
 - Ray Kelly for ongoing water quality monitoring
 - Niki Hill for Land for Wildlife enthusiasm across five properties
 - Carolyn Fitzgerald for ongoing work and successes at Little Gubberley Creek
 - THECA for exceptional educational work with their forums
 - Julia Blumhardt for fantastic rehabilitation work at the Indooroopilly Mine site
- Our interpretive signage with funding from Hydrobiology and the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund is still in development. Delays have partly to do with artists' and designer side of things, partly with my own lack of time to push a little harder. They will definitely be produced and installed within the next few months.

Corporate development

CWCN is very close to moving into its own catchments centre. How close this may be remains guess work as apparently the lease department is "very busy" and "hopes" to be able to deal with our application after Easter. A condition, set by the lease department, was that we cover the house with building and public liability insurance at the time of the application (not at the start of the lease), therefore it should be reasonable to expect some efficiency in expediting the lease agreement. There is also the case of the leaking roof which thanks to the Australia Day storm was acknowledged. Cr Margaret de Wit has come to the rescue and will help us with the replacement of the roof, a very generous gesture we highly appreciate.

We continue to be exceptionally grateful to Brisbane City Council and Cr Julian Simmonds for having a house made available for CWCN use. Since our last AGM Council has substantially enlarged the funding for the catchment centre, and the house was finally moved from The Gap to Hepworth Street. It has many features which will be of enormous benefit to us and for the house to be used as a proper community hub.

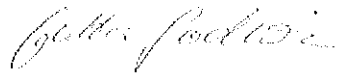
CWCN cannot be strengthened and capacity be built without a catchment centre. We are well into the fourth year of anticipating the move since we received the Lord Mayor's letter confirming the catchments centre for CWCN. Two years ago we applied for grants. Since receiving the funding we have five times submitted variation applications, mostly to do with extension for acquittals, but also to do with changes of supplier, installer and type and capacity of panels under the solar grant. The latter grant program doesn't exist anymore, prices for the product have dropped substantially, and different types and panels and converters are on the market, CWCN has lost all rebate possibilities. We thankfully received the help of our local State member, The Honourable Scott Emerson, of the Attorney General, The Honourable Jarrod Bleijie, to be allowed to use the monies received to double the solar panels from 1.5kW to 3kW. We hope that a new roof will be on the building by the time the acquittal period expires this time.

The Gambling Community Benefits Fund has required several quoting procedures because of delays. Currently goods accumulate in the Godwin living room and deliveries are being postponed because of lack of any date for the house being available for use, putting us at the end of any installation queue. Again, another round of acquittal dates is looming. Other than that we remain positive and excited and start to envisage the opportunities provided by such a catchment centre.

A big thank you goes to all our volunteers who have again provided all their time and enthusiasm to make the Inner West catchments a place of healthy biodiversity.

An equally big thank you goes to members of the CWCN committee who have worked hard on shaping our successful year.

Tuesday, 26 March 2013

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jutta Godwin".

Jutta Godwin
President